

COUNCIL POLICY



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| Policy name | Financial Assistance Policy |
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Abstract

The Financial Assistance Policy governs how Council will provide any financial assistance, in cash or in kind, to any individual or group.

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| Dates | Policy or amendment approved [18 Apr 2012] Policy or amendment takes effect [18 Apr 2012] Policy is due for review (up to 4 years) [18 Apr 2013] |
| Endorsed by | Council – Resolution 292, June 2010 Director Community and Corporate Services |
| Approved by <i>Enter meeting type, date and resolution no. once adopted</i> | Gunnedah Shire Council, at its Ordinary Meeting of Council held 18 Apr 2012 Resolution number: 218.1 |
| Policy Custodian | Director of Community and Corporate Services |
| Relevant to | Entire Community, anyone approaching Council for financial assistance, Councillors and staff |
| Superseded Policies | Resolution 292, June 2010 with regard to financial assistance |
| Related documents | Policy – Small Grants Program (Under Section 356 of Local Government Act Policy - Debt Recovery – Rates, Charges and other debtors |
| Related legislation | Local Government Act 1993 |
| File number | 636468 |

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Financial Assistance Policy governs how Council will deal with any approach by any person, group or body for financial assistance. It aims to provide clear guidance to Councillors, staff and those making an approach for financial assistance on Council's policy around such approaches.
- 1.2 It aims to facilitate consistent and equitable treatment of each approach, and ensure Council's limited resources are appropriately allocated to the community in accordance with Council's objectives, based on capacity to assist and relative needs of those approaching Council.

2. Scope

- 2.1 The Policy applies to Council as a whole, Councillors and staff in dealing with the provision of financial assistance; and any person, group or body approaching Council for financial assistance.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 Financial assistance is taken to mean the provision of any financial benefit; including but not limited to:
 - (a) a grant of funds,
 - (b) a loan,
 - (c) subsidised costs,
 - (d) any reduction or waiving of Council's adopted fees and charges,
 - (e) any write-down or write-off of an applied rate, fee or charge,
 - (f) in the absence of a defined fee or charge, the provision of services or use of facilities at a cost below what it would otherwise be commercially provided,
 - (g) any in kind contribution such as works or infrastructure.

4. Policy principles

- 4.1 Council will apply this policy consistently to all actions or decisions in relating to the provision of financial assistance.

5. Policy statement

5.1 Criteria for consideration of provision of financial assistance

5.1.1 A proposal to provide or a request for financial assistance will not be actioned, reported to Council for consideration, or decided upon unless:

- (a) Clear and detailed information on any and all assistance proposed or requested are provided;
- (b) Current financial statements, and where one should reasonably be available an audit opinion on those statements, are provided to assist Council in assessing the needs of the proposed/requesting beneficiary;
- (c) An assessment of Council's capacity to provide the proposed or requested financial assistance and the impacts on its financial position if such is provided.

6. Accountability, roles and responsibilities

6.1 Policy Custodian – Director Community and Corporate Services

The Policy Custodian is the officer accountable for managing policy compliance and initiating the policy review process. They will also have the responsibility for all aspects of policy implementation, unless appropriately delegated to another officer. These responsibilities include being the primary contact point for advice on the policy or its implementation; establishing and maintaining Council's records in relation to the policy; proposing amendments; and managing the consultation process when the policy is due for review.

6.2 Authority

No authority to depart from this policy is granted to any person. All actions and decisions must be in accordance with this policy and all policies relating to the provision of financial assistance, either pre-existing or to be developed must conform to the requirements of this policy. The application of this policy can only be varied by Council.

7. Acknowledgements

7.1 No acknowledgements.

8. Version control and change history *Record version changes in table*

| Date | Version | Approved by & resolution no. | Amendment |
|-------------|---------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 11 Apr 2012 | Draft | [Council: Res No.] | Draft for Council's consideration |
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